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Extracts.

"NO ADMITTANCE."

AN ORIENTAL TALE.
A wealthy Syrian—Abdallah by name—
Fell ill and died; and when his spirit came
Before the gate of heaven, the angel there
(Who stands with awful countenance)
To guard the elysian portals, said:
"Thou comest here, O Syrian, how I hate thee!
And answered, "From Aleppo." "Very well,"
"I have not thou," said the heavenly sentinel.
"A merchant." "True; but tell me all the rest."
"Berthel the angel, "All—the worst and best;
From me—refuse to get on to the celestial
Whereas the mortal and all his life revealed,
And nothing but of light that he had done:
How he had sailed beneath the Indian sea,
In quest of diamonds, and for yellow gold
To Northern Asia; how he bought and sold
By the Red Sea, and with a sigh that spoke
And stormy Persian gulf, and all the while
Had bravely tried to keep his conscience clear,
Though always buying cheap and selling dear,
As merchants are, "And so I thrived again."
He said "for many a year—nor all in vain
For public benevolence, since I gave
Freely for charity—contents to save,
Enough for me—a handsome store—
And that is all." "Nay, there is something more,"
The angel said: "Of the domestic life
Thou hast not spoken—hast thou not a wife?"
"Yes," said the Syrian, with a sigh that spoke
Of many a groan beneath the marriage yoke.
Whereat the angel said, "By God's rich grace,
Come in!—poor suffering soul, and take thy place
Among the married—and give heaven thanks!"
Now, as he entered the celestial ranks,
Another soul approached the golden door,
Who, having heard all that he came before
Had spoken, and observed him entering in,
The open portal, thought himself to win
Easy admittance; for when he had told
His history, like the other, he made bold
To add, "All this, my angel, is most true;
And as, for wives, I've had no less than two."
"Twice married?" said the angel with a frown
Of wrath and scorn—"Unfortunate have place
In heaven's bliss mansion—but, by Reason's rules,
(So get thee hence!) there is no room for foul!"

MISSISSIPPI JUSTICE.

THRILLING SCENE IN A SOUTHERN COURT.
I witnessed an amusing trial before a
colored "squire" in this place. Two of the
citizens here got into a dispute. One of
them, with a double-barreled shotgun,
attempted to defend himself, the other
having a six-shooter. The Deputy Marshal
sprang the first shot, and the other, in
turn, fired the second shot, and the pistol
flew for a mile. The "squire" called the
Court to order by saying: "All you negroes
take off your hats in Court." Then, leaning
back in his chair with all the dignity and
pomp of Caesar, sang out to one of the par-
ties: "Are you guilty or not guilty?" "Of
what?" said the party. "Gilty presenting
arms with intent to kill," said his Honor.
"Not guilty," was the answer. "What is your
proof?" The witnesses, Dr. Benjamin Franklin,
the American philosopher, who was in Paris,
brought his grandson to court, asking him
to bless the lad.
But the excitement of the reception was
too much for Voltaire. As a contemporary
said, the new sort of life which the old man
from France led at Paris, after a long and
fatiguing journey in a cold season of the
year, the continual efforts which he was
obliged to make in receiving his visitors as
well as in attending to his own affairs, and
in maintaining his high reputation for wit
and brilliant sallies; the courtesy and kindness
which he sought to show to everybody in
proportionate degree; lastly, his temper, to
which, for a long while past, he had been
accustomed to give free vent, but which at
that time he was obliged to curb—all con-
tributed to undermine his health, which was
already grievously impaired.
The French preceptor deputed Voltaire's
presence in Paris; but, notwithstanding the
various ecclesiastical designs to check his
popularity, it increased daily. The cry of
"Vive Voltaire!" was constantly resound-
ing, and "There he is!" was shouted in the
streets whenever, with his Louis Quatorze
wig and scarlet cap on his head, and wrapped
up in his fur pelisse, he entered his carriage,
which was of sky-blue colour, decorated with
stars, and drew out. "I am stifled," said he,
"but it is beneath roses." And the roses were
arrested to him, for he loved all this adula-
tion, though the excitement of it was killing him.
Even to the last he was eager to add to
his fame, for night and day he wrote, and
what he filled the world with his thoughts,
who ruled its opinions by his pen, was
fervid, excited, and anxious in putting the
last touches to a new tragedy, "Irene,"
which he had been writing with as eager a
desire for fame as though it were his maiden
effort.
Among his innumerable guests came the
friend of his long past youth, Madame du
Deffand. They were both very old, and she
was blind. They were both philosophers,
yet she passed her whole life in flying from
serious reflection; while he was still forever
in the attempt to win fresh laurels for
himself.
Madame du Deffand, as every one knows,
was the intimate friend and constant cor-
respondent of Horace Walpole, who declared
her to be, despite her age and infirmities, one
of the most charming of women.
She could not see Voltaire, but she could
hear him speak. The sound of his voice,
weak with age, was most pleasant to her. He
could not see her, but he was still forever
not like to behold his own shadow, nor to
bear its own echo.
The day at last came for the representa-
tion of "Irene." All Paris was mad with
excitement, and my grandmother, the
Duchess of Melfort, went with Madame du
Deffand to the theatre. Men, women, and
even children, of all ranks and conditions,
were eager to catch a glimpse of one whose name
was in every mouth.
Louis XVI. from his youth had had a hor-
ror of Voltaire's writings, and he had im-
posed such restrictions as he considered neces-
sary to prevent the Court at Versailles from
joining in any demonstration in honour of
the philosopher. Voltaire, had been, still
was, excluded from the Versailles, and he was
not allowed to appear there; but, nevertheless,
at that occasion when "Irene" was produced,
at that occasion when the Comte d'Artois
was there, and when my grandmother
used to say that the Queen herself was like-
ly to be present, though in disguise. The Due
d'Orleans, ever in search of popularity, was
there as a matter of course; and so was Ma-
dame du Deffand, to whom the Queen had
given the nickname of "the nursing mother
of philosophers."
In fact all the world was present. The
multitude overflowed the enclosure, and the
benches, the boxes, the corridors were filled
to suffocation. Even the curtain which still
hung before the stage seemed to quiver with
excitement while the audience waited the
arrival of Voltaire. He came at last, and he
was greeted with such a shout of applause
that the roof of the theatre seemed to tremble.
Every body was eager to touch him, to look at him
closely, and some even tried to pluck some
hair from the fur of his pelisse, that they
might keep it as a relic.
When he appeared in his box a simulta-
neous shout of "Vive Voltaire!" was raised;
and then the actor Brizard approached, and
placed a laurel crown upon his head. Vol-
taire said, "I am a man of letters," he ex-
claimed, "do you wish me to die of joy?" The

MR. HIGGINBOTHAM'S
CATASTROPHE.

About the first of September my fellow
traveller and myself arrived at a country
town where a small company of actors, on
their return from a summer campaign in the
British provinces, were giving a series of
dramatic exhibitions. A moderately sized
hall of the town had been converted into a
theatre. The performances that evening were
"The Heir at Law," and "No Son
No Supper," with the recitation of "Alexan-
der's Feast" between the play and the farce.
The house was thin and dull. But the next
day there appeared to be brighter prospects,
the playbill announcing at every corner, on
the town pump, and awful screech!—on
the very door of the meeting house, an Un-
precedented Attraction! After setting forth
the ordinary entertainments of the theatre,
the public were informed, in the largest type
that the printing office could supply, that
the manager had been fortunate enough to
acquire an engagement with the celebra-
ted Story-teller. He would, his first
appearance that evening, and recite his
famous tale of Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe,
which had been received with rapturous
applause by audiences in all the principal
cities. This outrageous flourish of trumpets,
he it known, was wholly unauthorised by
me, who had merely made an engagement
for a single evening, without assuming any
more celebrity than the little possessed.
As for the tale, I could hardly have been
apprehended by rapturous audiences, being
yet an untried plot; nor even when I stepped
upon the stage was it decided whether Mr.
Higginbotham should live or die.
In the evening, after the commencement of
the tragedy of Douglas, I took a ramble through
the town to quicken my ideas by active
motion. On my return to the tavern the
tragedy was already commenced, and being
in the theatre, and indifferently per-
formed, it left so much the better a chance
for the Story-teller. The bar was thronged
with customers, the toddy stick keeping a
continual tattoo; while in the hall there was
a broad, deep, buzzing sound, with an occa-
sional peal of impatient thunder—all sym-
ptoms of an overflowing house, and an eager
audience. I drank a glass of wine and water
and stood at the subscription counter with a
young person of doubtful sex. If a gentle-
man, how could he have performed the
singing girl the night before in "No Song
No Supper?" Or, if a lady why did she
exact Young Norval, and now wear a
green coat and white pantaloons in the
character of Little Pickle? In either case
the dress was pretty and the wearer bewitch-
ing; so that, at the proper moment, I step-
ped forward with a gay heart and, being a
man, while the orchestra played a tune that
had resounded at many a country ball, and
the organ, as it rose, discovered something
like a country bar-room. Such a scene was
well enough adapted to such a tale. The
orchestra of our little theatre consisted of
two fiddles and a clarinet; but if the whole
harmony of the Tremont had been there, it
might have swelled in vain, though the
tumult of applause that greeted me. The
good people of the town, knowing that the
world contained innumerable persons of
celebrity undrunk of by them, took it for
granted that I was one, and that their roar
of welcome was but a feeble echo of those
which had thundered around me in lofty
theatres. Such an enthusiastic uproar was
never heard. Each personer entered a *Bureau*
clapping a hundred hands, besides keeping

people called about to him to retain the
crown, while the various titles of all his most
popular works were repeated and echoed
from every part of the theatre.
The curtain before the stage now drew up,
and the first scene of the tragedy appeared.
The play began, and the actors and specta-
tors were so occupied with the story, that they
scarcely attended to the work, so that "never
was a play so badly played," so much ap-
plauded, and so little listened to.
Presently, when the piece was concluded,
the sound of trumpets and drums announced
that a grand ceremony was about to be per-
formed. The bust of Voltaire was placed
upon a pedestal before the drop-scene, and
the actors in the tragedy, who still wore
the costumes in which they had played their
parts, formed a semi-circle round it, palms
and garlands in their hands. "A crown of
laurel was placed upon the head of the bust
by an actor dressed in the garb of a monk,
and a favourite actress of the time then stepped
forward and recited some verses, the con-
cluding lines of which were—
"Voltaire, regis la science,
Que l'on a vu de presenter;
Quand est la France en la gloire."
After this, each actor laid the wreath he
held round the bust; and after one of the
actresses had kissed it, all the other actors
and actresses followed her example. The
acclamations, which were once again, were
renewed with fresh fervour when Dr. Frank-
lin, the "Liberator of the New World," was
called, called, appeared by the side of the
bust, and embraced him by the side of the
audience.
When Voltaire at last left the theatre,
garlands were thrown around him; and it
was necessary for guards to clear the path,
because of the dense mass of enthusiastic
admirers who crowded it. When he was re-
sented in his sky-blue carriage studded with
stars, to return home to his theatre, these
honours were unheeded, while young poets
and literary aspirants disputed among them-
selves the honour of drawing him to his hotel.
Voltaire's success was complete, but the
excitement of it was too much for him. His
physicians in vain prescribed remedies to
calm his nerves. He could not sleep; and
the friend of his youth, the Due de Richelieu
(who was reported to have been initiated
into the secret of perpetual youth, and still
lives amidst the golden clouds of life at the
hands of the ever young Count de St. Ger-
main), sent an opiate to him, with due direc-
tions for dividing the dose. Voltaire, eager
for rest and impatient of pain, swallowed the
opiate, but forgot the directions; in conse-
quence of which he soon slept too pro-
foundly for either priest or doctor to arouse
him.
When the lethargy produced by the drug
had partially exhausted itself, he awakened
for a moment, and unknown to the Due de
Richelieu—"Brother Calu!" Then he re-
lapsed into such a state of unconsciousness
that it was with difficulty, if at all, that either
the Count de St. Sulpice or the Abbe Gauthier,
both of whom were anxious to convert the
philosopher of his deathbed, could get him
to make a last confession.—From "Recollections
of Society," by Lady Clementine Davies.

VOLTAIRE.
It was Carnival time when the aged Vol-
taire returned to Paris after his long absence;
and, as he was not known, he was
looked at or cheered him when he made
his appearance, thinking, in consequence of
the strange garments which he wore, that
he was in masquerade for their amusement.
And, indeed, they were not apparently with-
out good grounds for forming such a sup-
position, for his out-door dress was a
doublet enveloped his frail body. A huge
Louis Quatorze wig of wool shaded his thin
cheeks, and the wig was surmounted by a
red cap trimmed with fur. In form and size
he was, as he himself said, "a mere skeleton";
but his eyes still gleamed with such mar-
vellous brilliancy that their magnetic power
was felt by all upon whom they shone.
He alighted, upon his arrival, at Paris, at
the Hotel of the Marquis de Villette, whose
wife, Voltaire's adopted daughter, and
was summoned by him "Delle et Bonne."
Voltaire's niece, Madame Denis, was with
him. The day after his return to Paris, a
prodigious concourse of all the first people
of the Court and city called to do homage to
him, and the Due de Orleans (afterwards
known as Egalite), was prepared to receive
him at the Palais Royal with more than
regal honours. Dr. Benjamin Franklin, the
American philosopher, who was in Paris,
brought his grandson to court, asking him
to bless the lad.
But the excitement of the reception was
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